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THOUGHTS

ON THE

PRESENT STATE OF DISCIPLINE

IN

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOLS,

IN

KENDAL,

AND ON THE BEST MEANS OF IMPROVING IT:

ORIGINALLY SUBMITTED TO THE CONSIDERATION OF THE COMMITTEE, AND NOW PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST.

The infliction of any corporal punishment would probably render the day odious to the young sufferers, and give them unfavourable impressions of it, and every thing belonging to it, as long as they lived.—These institutions must be founded on a system not of severity, but of kindness, of persuasion, of encouragement, of reward. These must be the only incitements to industry made use of in them.

Bp. Porteus's Letter on Sunday-Schools.

Kendal:

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The profits arising from the sale of this publication will be appropriated to the use of the Sunday-schools.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE author of the following pages wiſhes not that they ſhould be conſidered as containing any thing original or unknown. On the contrary, it is their beſt recommendation, that though the principles contained in them, may not have been much attended to *here*, and on that account, may appear new; yet, in other countries, they have been put in practice upon a large ſcale, with the happieſt effects. His ſole aim is to excite a more general attention than has hitherto been paid to a ſubject, which independently of every charitable conſideration, ſo nearly affects the intereſts of the whole community. For let it be remembered that, whatever grand queſtions may be agitated in the world a few years hence, the generation at preſent under training, will then become the chief actors; and therefore it is highly expedient, while the opportunity remains, to ſtore their minds

with ſuch good principles, and to give them ſuch an early and habitual bias in favour of good order, that they may afterwards repay the attention beſtowed on their education, by the part they act in ſociety. The books that have been conſulted, are generally quoted; but on referring to the works themſelves, it will alſo be ſeen that the language has frequently been borrowed with as little ſcruple as the ſentiments, even where it is not formally announced.

The author takes pleaſure alſo in acknowledging that he is indebted, for many valuable hints, to an ingenious friend, whoſe name he ſhould have been proud to publiſh, if it had been conſiſtent with his plan; which is to let the ſentiments ſpeak for themſelves.

THOUGHTS

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ON

SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.

IF Sunday-Schools be intended not merely to inſtruct the well-diſpoſed, but alſo to reclaim the ill-diſpoſed; to excite a ſpirit of induſtry among the idle, and a ſenſe of duty and religion among the depraved; to teach the diſorderly a practical leſſon on the nature and fitneſs of ſocial obligation, by making them feel experimentally the ſatisfaction of conforming to preſcribed rules, as well as the impolicy of breaking through them:—then it is obvious that the real utility of theſe inſtitutions muſt be eſtimated, not by the ſums ſubſcribed for their ſupport, nor yet by the parade of numbers on the rolls; but by the manner in which thoſe ſums are applied, and by the

ſucceſs with which thoſe numbers are trained; by the ſum of idleneſs, profligacy, and miſery diminiſhed, and of induſtry, virtue, and happineſs augmented. "By their fruits ſhall ye know them."

And when it is conſidered that the grand difficulty will conſiſt in bringing thoſe, who are the fitteſt objects of this moral diſcipline, to avail themſelves of its benefits, by giving their attendance; thoſe poor children in ſhort, who either have no parents to admoniſh them, or what is worſe, who are continually expoſed to the bad example of diſorderly parents; it is farther obvious that the ſimple act of regular attendance becomes an object of the greateſt importance; both as being neceſſary for attaining any valuable ſtock of learning, and alſo on it's own account, as contributing to the growth, and indicating the exact progreſs of thoſe orderly habits which lay the only ſecure foundation for virtuous conduct.

Indeed the ſucceſs of the whole deſign ſeems to depend ſo immediately on the ſtate of the attendance, that wherever this barometer ſtands low, it is greatly to be apprehended, the benefits reſulting to ſociety from ſuch inſtitutions, will not be, in any degree, equal to the expence of ſupporting them. It cannot therefore be too ſeriouſly enquired whether the means that have been adopted for the purpoſe, be in reality calculated to anſwer the end.

It is indeed a very pleaſing conſideration, that the good effects of the ſchools in this town are already pretty

pretty generally acknowledged; insomuch that some persons have argued, that the success is already as great as could reasonably be expected, from the very nature of the instruments with which we have to work; that considering the depravity of many children and their parents, it is in vain to look for absolute perfection; and that it is not likely any alteration could be made for the better.

The original founders, however, thought very differently; they saw, and acknowledged that the plan was incomplete; and in several addresses to the public, which are preserved in the minute-book, they feelingly remark that "the improvement made, and "the visible difference in our streets on Sundays "would be still more evident, if the *parents* could be "brought to favour the design; but that in some "instances, scholars have been allured by idle com- "panions to fly from church and school to play, that "unthinking parents are too apt to indulge them, "and to send trifling excuses for their absence, and "even to take their part when it is found necessary "to correct them; but that the institution being in "its infancy will doubtless admit of various altera- "tions and amendments, which ought to be adopted "from time to time, as they are found expedient."

When however it is remembered what difficulties these benevolent persons had to contend with, in establishing an untried scheme, and how much they actually performed; it will be thought more sur-

prising

priſing, that they ſhould have ſucceeded ſo far as they have done; than that they ſhould have left ſomething for poſterity to finiſh. But the ſame excuſe for imperfections cannot be allowed to their ſucceſſors, who have not the ſame obſtacles to encounter, and who are alſo expected to profit by more mature experience. On the contrary, in the true ſpirit of the inſtitution, they are earneſtly called upon, not to reſt ſatisfied, while any thing remains to be performed; but to uſe every effort on their parts, to remedy the defects of which their predeceſſors complained; that what has been ſo well begun, may be carried to the greateſt perfection of which its nature will admit.

Abſolute perfection, indeed, may not be attainable either in this or in any human undertaking; but the wiſdom of aiming at perfection is nevertheleſs generally acknowledged; reaſon ſuggeſts it and revelation ſanctions it; and if it were poſſible for it to be more evident in one caſe than in another, it muſt be ſo in this; where if the ſcheme ſhould contain principles in any degree vague or contradictory, its operation muſt neceſſarily prove weak and uncertain; and where, in the exact proportion that the regulations are well or ill digeſted, good or evil may be expected to predominate in the reſult.

If therefore it be more bleſſed to reſtore a diſeaſed limb of the body politic, than to cut it off, and to be the inſtrument of reſcuing a reaſonable ſoul from ruin, than to abandon it to its fate; if in the moſt humble

humble and qualified ſenſe of the words, we may be permitted to ſay, that ſunday-ſchools are not ordained "to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance, "and that there is joy in heaven over one ſinner that "repenteth, more than over ninety and nine juſt "perſons who need no repentance;" then let theſe ſerious conſiderations lead us "not to deſert a ſingle "child if it be poſſible to avoid it, how abject ſoever "its condition may be, and let us not refine away "the ſubſtance of this ſacred obligation."* Let us go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in. Let us not do things by halves. Let us not be ſatisfied, without a very concluſive proof, that the adminiſtration is incapable of farther improvement: "for after all, we are unprofitable ſervants; we have only done that which it was our duty to do."

Indeed it were to be wiſhed, that all who deſpair of ſeeing the ends of the inſtitution more completely fulfilled, would take a ſurvey of the exiſting regulations; and after weighing their component parts in the impartial ſcale of reaſon, that they would then aſk themſelves whether it be ſo clear that all the fault reſts with the children and their parents; that no part of it attaches to the plan itſelf, or to thoſe who conduct it; and that nothing more can poſſibly be done to make the children attend better. And it is believed that the following ſtatement will not be found materially incorrect. On

* Jonas Hanway.

On the one hand it will be ſeen that many circumſtances concur to favour the deſign; that the ſchools are not made ſubſervient to the views of any one ſect or party, which is a rock that they have ſplit upon in ſo many other places; but that all parties with a truly catholic charity do cordially unite in their ſupport; that the directors do in the main ſo vigilantly attend to the duties of their truſt, and thereby acquire ſuch a knowledge of both maſters and ſcholars, as renders it difficult for any great abuſe to eſcape unobſerved; and that the children are encouraged to attend, and their parents to ſend them, by the proſpect of being elected to the blue-coat ſchools; and alſo of obtaining the green cloaths, which are annually diſtributed by a well known charitable individual. A penny loaf is alſo given to every ſcholar on Chriſtmas day.

On the other hand, it cannot perhaps be ſo properly affirmed that any part of the preſent ſyſtem is poſitively bad, as that there is an evident *want* of regular ſyſtem. There has hitherto been no certain ſtandard, whereby the viſitors, maſters, and ſcholars, might be enabled to regulate their proceedings: too much has been left to the temper of individuals: what was law in one ſchool might not be ſo in another, or in the ſame ſchool, at different times: no preciſe time has been fixed for calling the muſter-rolls: the viſitors have generally been appointed for ſo ſhort a period, that by the time they were got well acquainted

acquainted with the duties of their office and the faces of the children, and before they could digeſt any efficient regulations, they were ſuperſeded by others, who might never be informed of what had been done, or might think other meaſures more adviſeable: and theſe again were liable to be ſuperſeded in their turn.

The conſequences of this want of ſyſtematic arrangement are obvious. A ſcheme, where it is proper that all the movements ſhould be methodical and uniform, has been ſubject to fluctuate on every change of viſitors; or what, if poſſible, is ſtill more prepoſterous, the maſters continuing in office, while the viſitors were changed, and being thereby better verſed in the details of buſineſs, and there being no other viſible way for a new viſitor to learn what was expected from him, than by applying to the maſter for information; the natural order of things has ſometimes been ſo far inverted, that inſtead of the employer directing the agent, it has been neceſſary for the agent to direct the employer. So that an artful maſter, if he met with a viſitor of an eaſy temper, might contrive to defeat the ſubſtantial purpoſes, for which viſitors were originally appointed; and though it is not meant to inſinuate that the thing has ever actually taken place, yet in a concern of ſuch importance, the very poſſibility of it ſhould be effectually prevented.

Again it is not difficult to aſſign the reaſon, why the *rewards*, that are offered, have not excited that ſpirit

ſpirit of emulation, which might have been looked for. In the firſt place, they are too *diſtant*. Children cannot be expected to look beyond immediate conſequences; and ſix pence given in hand would weigh more with one of them, than the reverſion of a green coat, or of being elected to the blue-coat ſchool, at the year's end. Perhaps alſo they are rather too limited in their extent, to produce any very general competition; for if all deſerved them equally, all could not obtain them; eſpecially ſince numbers now find themſelves poſitively excluded from the blue-coat ſchool, becauſe ſome one of the ſame family has already partaken of its benefits.

But this is not the *only* nor the *chief* objection. It is not ſo much the ſcantineſs of the rewards, as the manner of beſtowing them, that takes off from their efficacy. If it were generally known that they would always be conferred on the *moſt deſerving*, they would ſtill be ſought after with eagerneſs. A *green coat* would then be an honourable mark of diſtinction, and to be promoted to the blue-coat ſchool would be conſidered as the moſt flattering teſtimonial of approved merit; and the value of both would be greatly enhanced thereby: and in this, as in all other reſpects, the true intereſts of the blue-coat ſchools and the ſunday-ſchools are inſeparably united. For if the one were conſidered as only a higher form, to be filled by the moſt meritorious ſelected from the other, it is probable there would then be fewer complaints of blue-coat

blue-coat ſcholars turning out ill; they would be in greater requeſt when they left ſchool, and having already ſome character to loſe, they would more generally feel an honeſt pride in preſerving it. No apprentice-fee would be neceſſary to recommend ſuch children to the beſt places.

But in no part of the adminiſtration of the ſunday-ſchools is the want of ſyſtem more evident than in this. Indeed as far as the inſtitution itſelf is concerned, it has nothing but diſagreeables to bequeath; confinement, threats, and whippings. The rewards have not properly any connection with it; for (excluſive of the annual donation of bread, which is no mark of diſtinction, becauſe it is given to all alike, and probably does but little good) they are not ſupplied out of it's funds, and conſequently come not in any ſhape under it's juriſdiction. The committee, who are certainly the beſt qualified to direct their application, cannot always either enſure their being beſtowed on the deſerving, or prevent their being thrown away upon the worthleſs: and I know from experience, it has ſometimes happened that children no way remarkable for induſtry, and ſome even who were notorious for the contrary, have obtained rewards by mere dint of the noiſy importunity and ſqualid appearance of their parents; while modeſt merit has been paſſed by unnoticed and unrewarded.

This indiſcriminate way of beſtowing favour is

prejudicial to the intereſts of the charity in various ways. It diſguſts the modeſt, and encourages the impudent. It cauſes a divided empire: the committee have not that complete ſway over the minds of the children, which they would poſſeſs, if theſe had every thing to hope and fear from *them* alone, inſtead of having their attention attracted to ſome external influence: and a palpable contradiction is thus given to the grand moral principle of the inſtitution, which ought to be, that virtuous exertion will never fail to obtain a recompence of reward, and that idleneſs will infallibly loſe it. In the words of the late good Biſhop SHIPLEY, on a like occaſion, I may remark, "it is unpleaſant to cenſure "the performances of men, whoſe good intentions "deſerve juſt commendation; but it is alſo incum-"bent upon us to provide that our own good inten-"tions may not loſe their effect, by any error or "imperfection in the performance."

Let it therefore be allowed me, without giving offence, to ſuggeſt to thoſe benevolent perſons, who have ſhewn by their works that they have the welfare of the inſtitution ſincerely at heart, how little it avails to give money to charitable purpoſes, unleſs they alſo take care that it be properly applied; and to utter a reſpectful wiſh that they would go one ſhort ſtep further, and take the trouble ſo to ſelect the objects of their bounty, that it may not directly, or indirectly, counteract the ends it was intended to promote.

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The *laſt*, and perhaps the greateſt defect, which remains to be noticed, is the want of ſome poſitive law to reſtrict the uſe of bodily puniſhment, and to protect the children from being wantonly abuſed. How often ſuch caſes may have happened hitherto, it is of no conſequence to the preſent argument to determine: that they are very poſſible, and therefore ought to be guarded againſt, if it be meant to enſure the good will of the children, and the final ſucceſs of the plan, cannot be denied.

Thus have I endeavoured to analyze the preſent ſtate of diſcipline in the ſchools; which, if the account be accurate, appears to be a compound of ingredients, good upon the whole, but not without a conſiderable mixture of alloy: ſo that there ſeems no neceſſity for having recourſe to the depravity of human nature, to account for the want of more complete ſucceſs.

The defect is manifeſtly in the *plan* itſelf; and the conſequences are ſuch as might reaſonably be looked for. The attendance, as might be expected, is certainly better than in moſt other places; but the evil, which our predeceſſors lamented, and which they hoped maturer experience would have corrected, ſtill exiſts at the end of ten years from the date of the complaint, and probably will continue to do ſo, under the preſent regimen, while human nature remains the ſame.

Having therefore in ſome meaſure aſcertained the

cauſe of the complaint; a fit *remedy* is next to be ſought: and of what nature this ought to be, appears ſo evident as almoſt to admit of mathematical proof. Take away the cauſe, and the effect will ſoon ceaſe. Whatever proportion the force and reſiſtance may have hitherto borne to each other, then diminiſh the weight in *one* ſcale, and the *other* will preponderate, with a force equal to the difference: but *ſubtract* from the one, and at the ſame time *add* to the other, and the effect will be ſtill more decided. If therefore ſo much has already been done under a ſyſtem, where it is clear to demonſtration that ſo many powerful obſtacles have impeded it's progreſs, what might we not expect, if all theſe were removed; if "every branch, that beareth not fruit, were taken "away; and every branch, that beareth fruit, were "purged, that it might bring forth more fruit!" JOHN xv. ii.

Aboliſh then as much as poſſible, every thing that can create doubt or diſguſt, on the one hand; and ſtrengthen as much as poſſible every motive that can excite induſtry, on the other. Leave nothing to be *underſtood*, that can conveniently be *expreſſed*; and the movements will be more uniform. Convince the children that ſterling merit is the only paſsport to rewards, praiſes, and diſtinctions; and they will ſtrive to excel. At the ſame time watch them ſo cloſely, that no remiſſneſs can exiſt unobſerved, and they will in time become regular through

through habit. But laſtly and above all things, take care that every thing be not ſpoiled by the ill-judged ſeverity of the maſters.

The general truth of theſe principles will not perhaps be diſputed; but I know it has been queſtioned to what extent they ought to be carried; and as from the great importance of the ſubject, the determination cannot poſſibly be a matter of indifference, it is very neceſſary to have this point preciſely aſcertained.

Firſt then, with reſpect to *bodily puniſhment*;—for my own part I much doubt whether it be not through the imperfection of human inſtitutions, that it becomes neceſſary in any caſe whatever; and whether, in a complete ſyſtem of ethics, the *privation of reward* would not produce all the good effects of poſitive puniſhment, without any of it's bad ones. But in the preſent caſe, it ſeems particularly exceptionable: for if uſed to children, that might have been operated on by gentle treatment, it ought to be reprobated in the ſtrongeſt terms, as ſavage and tyrannical: and even with the refractory, it will only tend to drive them from ſchool, and to ſtrengthen their antipathy to all kinds of reſtraint; or, as Count RUMFORD ſtrongly expreſſes it, to make them *inveterate man-haters*: and if we can do no good to ſuch children, we ſhould at leaſt be careful, not to "render their laſt ſtate worſe than their firſt."

But the point I wiſh to eſtabliſh, does not require that I ſhould occupy ſo wide a field. I will take a ground where there will be leſs room to diſpute. I will not aſſert that the force of argument will, in every poſſible caſe, ſuperſede the neceſſity of employing the argument of force; but that the latter ſhould never be reſorted to, till the former has been firſt fairly tried, and found ineffectual; and that, where puniſhment is indiſpenſable, in order that it may ſerve to reform the offender, inſtead of driving him from ſchool; and to be a warning to the by-ſtanders, inſtead of leading them to ſympathize with the ſufferer; it ſhould be adminiſtered in the moſt ſolemn and diſpaſſionate manner, and continued no longer than till the firſt ſymptom of reformation appear.

If theſe conſiderations were duly regarded (and let me add that all puniſhment, which is not directed by them, is fitter for *brutes* than reaſonable creatures) it is probable that the occaſions which render puniſhment juſtifiable, would happen but ſeldom: and the ſeldomer it is employed, the greater will be it's effect, when required. But ſuppoſing an inſtance to occur, where it ſhould ſeem inconſiſtent with the general good, any longer to forbear from chaſtiſement; I aſk who is to be the judge of this *critical* neceſſity? The maſter, or the viſitor?

A diſcretionary power to puniſh a fellow-creature is the higeſt prerogative that man can aſſume; and

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is ſo very liable to be turned to the moſt miſchievous purpoſes, that it never ought to be tolerated, where it is poſſible to avoid it. But where this cannot be done, it ought at any rate, to be lodged with thoſe who are the fartheſt removed from any temptation to pervert it. And when I contemplate how particularly the maſters are expoſed to provocations, which may get the better of their philoſophy, and urge them to unjuſtifiable exceſſes; I ſee no good to be expected from inveſting *them* with this dangerous piece of authority, that can any way be put in competition with the evils to be apprehended from their abuſing it. Would it be thought ſafe, to allow them to *expel* children at will? Certainly not.—This privilege is not exerciſed finally, even by the viſitors: and yet it may reaſonably be queſtioned, whether of the two, a diſcretionary power to ſtrike, or to expel children, be likely to prove a more miſchievous weapon in their hands. The human mind, with all it's inward ſprings ſo fearfully and wonderfully made, is too delicate a piece of mechaniſm, to be handled rudely, without having it's functions injured thereby; but, ſtrange to tell, men who would not be truſted to regulate a watch, or a muſical inſtrument, the ſtructure of which they had not particularly ſtudied, are deemed competent to exerciſe the profeſſion of education, which, of all others, requires to be conducted on the pureſt principles of ſcience.

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This remark is not meant to convey a perſonal reflection againſt any individual whatever: on the contrary, it is believed that the preſent maſters are men reſpectable in their ſtations. But I ſpeak of ſunday-ſchool maſters in general, and of the nature of the ſervices to be expected from them. They muſt remember that they are only ſubalterns in command. Their office ſhould be neither legiſlative, nor judicial; but ſimply executive. And let them not outſtep their province. Let them not uſurp a particle of diſcretionary power with impunity. Let it be their higheſt praiſe to conform themſelves, in all things, to the inſtructions of their employers. Let the viſitors, and the committee hold the reins of power; and hold them tightly too. A watchful jealouſy, on *their* part, will be far more in character than an ill-judged appearance of confidence.

Here it has been alledged, that theſe apprehenſions are in a great meaſure imaginary; that a diſcretionary power to correct children for miſbehaviour is only what is exerciſed in all other ſchools; that it has always been permitted in the ſunday-ſchools, and no bad effects have hitherto reſulted from it; and that it is abſolutely neceſſary, in order to give the maſters conſequence with the ſcholars, who otherwiſe would not pay them a proper reſpect.

But it may be anſwered, firſt: Theſe inſtitutions are quite different in their nature from all other ſchools: for where the inſtruction is *paid* for by the parents,

parents, it is evident that *they* at leaſt comprehend the propriety of ſubordination, whether their children do or not; and further, they have a wholeſome reſtraint over the maſters, by having the power to change them at will, and to employ thoſe only of whom they approve. And therefore the argument does not ſtrictly apply to an inſtitution, where the parents are often more to blame than the children; and where the very complaint to be removed, is, their taking part with their children when they are corrected. But

Secondly, It is rather a haſty concluſion to draw, that becauſe a thing has been hitherto *permitted*, it is on that account, either proper or harmleſs. On the contrary, it is highly probable that to the indiſcriminate and improper uſe of ſeverity is to be attributed principally that degree of imperfection, which it is the object of our preſent enquiry to remedy.

Thirdly, As to the plea of it's being neceſſary to arm the maſters with conſiderable powers, in order to give them a proper conſequence, and to preſerve due obedience among the ſcholars: it is indeed neceſſary that they ſhould be reſpected by the ſcholars; and thoſe who are not ſo, are unfit for their places. But they muſt not miſtake their object. Reſpect is a matter of a *perſonal* nature; and the true way to gain it, is to *deſerve* it. But let not thoſe, who want the neceſſary qualifications, hope to conceal the defect under the robe of authority. Let them

them not, under cover of preſerving good order, graſp at power, which belongs not to them: for this is the common, ſtale pretence, on which tyrannical acts of every deſcription are attempted to be juſtified, and ought to be ſuſpected whenever it is advanced; but eſpecially in the preſent caſe.

For, let it be remembered, the inſtitution of which we are guardians, knows nothing of any undefined, or particular conſequence to be aſcribed to the maſters; nor of any blind implicit obedience to be exacted from the ſcholars, unconnected with the real edification of the latter, for whoſe ſole benefit the charity is ſupported: and if the *means* by which obedience is to be enforced, tend to excite ſuſpicion or diſguſt in *theſe*; ſo far from being valuable in themſelves, they will immediately defeat the end they were meant to anſwer. Let us beware leſt we confound the end with the means. We might perhaps ſucceed in filling the ſchools with unwilling *priſoners* by ſuch methods; but that the cauſe of morality would be much benefited thereby, may well be doubted.

But further, I would remark that a ſyſtem of terror and ſtripes is not only a leſs deſirable, but alſo a leſs effectual way of preſerving diſcipline, than a ſyſtem of moderation and exactneſs, even among the moſt refractory. For in the new inſtitution at Philadelphia, for reclaiming convicts, though there are only four men and a woman to overlook two hundred

hundred and eighty priſoners, and though they are poſitively forbidden even to carry ſticks for their defence, leſt, in the inſolence of office, they might be tempted to ſtrike thoſe who are ſubject to them, yet no want of wholeſome ſubordination is ever heard of. The liberty of appealing to a ſuperior viſitor, and the certainty that an impartial inveſtigation will take place in conſequence, proves an effectual ſecurity againſt improper behaviour, or frivolous complaints from either party. Inſomuch that thoſe who, a few years before, were not to be reſtrained by fetters, whipping, mutilation, or the fear of death; and who, when releaſed from priſon, were ſpeedily brought back for freſh crimes; are now ſo tamed by the unrelaxed exerciſe of reaſon and regimen, that they ſubmit without oppoſition to fixed rules, and ſeldom commit the ſlighteſt act of diſobedience. The Duke de LIANCOURT, who publiſhed the account, remarks that "when the promoters of this "new ſyſtem are aſked how it happens, that the "convicts wear the appearance, and conduct themſelves in the manner deſcribed; they reply, have "not you ſeen in London, men who venture to put "their heads into lions' mouths? have not you ſeen "in Philadelphia, children leading unmuzzled panthers, and carrying them in their arms? and if ſo, "why renounce the deſign of taming men? Nothing "more is wanting, than to find reſpectable men who "will devote themſelves without relaxation to this

"important

"important work." Count RUMFORD alſo, in deſcribing the treatment by which he reformed ſome thouſands of common beggars in Bavaria, declares that "during five years that the eſtabliſhment has "exiſted, not a blow has been given to any one; "not even to a child, by his inſtructor." If therefore it be found unneceſſary, and conſequently impolitic and inhuman, to ſuffer the moſt hardened of their ſpecies to be ſtruck at the pleaſure of their taſk-maſters, it is difficult to conceive a caſe where ſuch a privilege would be exerciſed with advantage, in the management of ſunday-ſchools.

This principle ſeems, from a printed report, to be acted upon in it's full extent, in the methodiſt ſunday-ſchools, at Stockport; where there are about fourteen hundred ſcholars; and from which many excellent hints may be borrowed. If the children behave ill *there*, the maſter muſt repreſent them to the viſitors; and *theſe* are to excerciſe their diſcretion with reſpect to puniſhing or expelling the offenders. They are alſo empowered to redreſs any grievances; and three of them may diſcharge any teacher, who has been guilty of any immorality, or improper conduct in the ſchools. And when the committee meets, the following enquiries are made by the chairman, "Are there any com-"plaints againſt the moral character of any teacher? "What perſons are admitted as teachers? Who offer "as teachers on trial? Are there any grievances "exiſting,

"exiſting, which can be redreſſed? And finally, can "any one propoſe any thing for the general good "of the ſchool, or for it's more extenſive uſe-"fulneſs?"

Mr. VOGHT alſo, in deſcribing a ſimilar eſtabliſhment at Hamburgh, lays ſo much ſtreſs on having the "regulations ſo choſen, as not to leave to any "inferior officer the ſmalleſt degree of arbitrary "power, that he thinks the inſtitution could not "have ſtood a year without it;" for he found that, whenever the vigilance of the inſpectors was relaxed, things began to get wrong immediately. If therefore any one be ſtill diſpoſed to reſiſt this maſs of evidence, I am entitled to aſk, what facts of equal weight he will find, to throw into the oppoſite ſcale.

It has been ſaid indeed, that many of thoſe with whom we have to do are rendered ſo callous by ill uſage at home, that milder treatment will have no effect upon them. It might perhaps be a ſufficient anſwer to this objection to ſay, that as I do not at preſent inſiſt on the *total abolition* of bodily puniſhment, but merely on the propriety of not lodging ſuch a power in the hands of the *maſters*, the argument is irrelevant. But it is of ſuch a ſtrange complexion, that thoſe who have recourſe to it, would do well to examine it's tendency: for upon this principle, the greater the oppreſſion that any claſs of people have been ſubject to, the greater will be the neceſſity for continuing it.

It is, however, no mean preſumption in favour of the ſyſtem I recommend, that it is directly the *oppoſite* of one which every body muſt allow to be very bad: and again if mild treatment be ſo perfectly new to theſe poor creatures, it will at leaſt make ſome impreſſion upon them by it's novelty. But I further aſk, has it ever been fairly tried? If not; it is much the ſame kind of argument that it would be to maintain, that a perſon brought up in a cold and bleak ſituation, would not perceive the difference, if he were removed to a more genial climate.

The old fable of the North-wind and the Sun, contending which would have greater power in forcing a traveller to part with his cloak, is a fit illuſtration of this doctrine. The chilling blaſts of wind had only the effect of making the man wrap his garment more cloſely about him; but the ſun's rays, breaking through the cloud ſoon afterwards, ſo thoroughly warmed him, that he willingly laid it aſide. So theſe poor children have been uſed like brutes, and they are actually made ſuch; their nobleſt faculties are frozen, and benumbed. But treat them like reaſonable creatures, and in time, their hearts will ſoften and expand.

If every child that is abuſed at home, had the good fortune to meet with kind treatment at ſchool, the contraſt could not fail to ſtrike it; and feeling itſelf happy in it's new ſituation, it would be careful not to forfeit it by miſbehaviour. But if the maſters,

men

men of various tempers and abilities, be entruſted with a diſcretionary power to puniſh thoſe whom they, in their caprice, may chance to think refractory; how can it be expected that the ſchools will always be, in reality, places of refuge from oppreſſion? In our great care to keep the children to their duty, ought we to overlook the neceſſity of keeping the maſters faithful to their truſt?

In all other caſes, arbitrary power is allowed to be unfriendly to the beſt intereſts of mankind; becauſe it is ſo liable to end in oppreſſion. And if the maſters, whatever be their character, be permitted to unite in themſelves the ſeparate powers of accuſer, witneſs, judge, jury, and executioner; powers ſo extenſive, that they are in danger of being abuſed, even among galley-ſlaves: upon what ground is it preſumed that they will not ſometimes, either through paſſion, or worſe motives, exert their authority more for their own pleaſure, than for the children's profit? And it is inconceivable what harm may ſpring from this ſource: for it will be difficult, afterwards, to recover the confidence of that child, who has once been puniſhed without ſufficient cauſe.

Here it is ſaid the maſters will be *reſponſible* for the uſe they make of their authority: and truly it is very meet they ſhould. But where arbitrary power exiſts, it is in vain to talk of any adequate reſponſibility. For in the firſt place, how are the caſes to be found out, in which it ought to be

enforced; unleſs they be previouſly determined? Will not a child either paſſively ſubmit to conſiderable oppreſſion, or elſe fly from ſchool in diſguſt, ſooner than he will think of ſtating his grievances to the viſitor, ſo long as he knows not what ſort of reception his complaints may meet with? And either of theſe caſes is earneſtly to be deprecated.

Again if it be allowed that, in *ſome* caſes, the maſter has a *right* to exerciſe his diſcretion, what viſitor will undertake to diſtinguiſh accurately all the endleſs ſhades of difference that may occur in a queſtion of right; and to decide impartially between plaintiff and defendant? But if only the bare poſſibility of the maſters behaving ſo as to call for cenſure, be admitted; then I contend that *prevention* is better than *puniſhment*: that it will do leſs hurt to the inſtitution, and will be more merciful to the maſters themſelves, to deprive them at once of the power to tranſgreſs, than firſt to lead them into temptation, and afterwards to puniſh them.

In every view, therefore, that I am able to take of the ſubject, it ſeems expedient that the rule ſhould be made abſolute, that no maſter preſume to ſtrike a child, on any account, except with the conſent, and in the preſence of the viſitor. A man of an unprejudiced mind, and a good diſpoſition, will not object to having his power ſo limited; and one of a different ſtamp ought not to be truſted without it. The buſineſs of the ſchools does not require that it ſhould be

be otherwiſe; for where correction is neceſſary, it will loſe none of it's good effects, by being enforced under the immediate ſanction of the viſitor. And what wiſdom is there in granting to any man, more power than is ſufficient, to enable him to perform the duties of his ſtation? But after all, it would be well if the caſes, where puniſhment muſt be inflicted, could be clearly ſpecified before-hand; for *ex poſt facto* laws are always more or leſs unpleaſant. And I ſhould ſuppoſe few violations of decorum could be ſo flagrant, as to juſtify bodily puniſhment for the *firſt* offence; unleſs perhaps telling a lie, and perſiſting in it. Lying ſhould always have a particular odium attached to it; and an honeſt confeſſion of the truth ſhould be allowed to make up for a multitude of faults.

But if the ſame offence be repeated, or one of a like nature be committed; the viſitor will then exerciſe his diſcretion, in having the offender either puniſhed, or reported to the committee for expulſion. Count RUMFORD found, that to be baniſhed from the houſe of induſtry at Munich, was conſidered as the moſt diſgraceful puniſhment that could be deviſed; and the dread of it, together with occaſionally witholding the uſual rewards, was ſufficient to keep the moſt unruly in order.

And provided the attendance at the ſchools were only rendered a thing to be *deſired*, rather than *dreaded* by the children, expulſion would not only be

more congenial to the ſpirit of the inſtitution, than whipping; but would alſo be fully as effectual in *preventing* crimes. For one of our moſt reſpectable and humane maſters informs me, that refractory children are as little improved by ſtripes, as the convicts of Philadelphia formerly were by fetters, &c. and when they have tranſgreſſed, they have been known to exclaim in contempt, "that they did not care "for a bit of a flogging, becauſe it was ſoon over." "Why then ſhould they be ſtricken any more? they "will only revolt more and more!*

But expulſion would be longer felt, and it alſo leaves room for reflection, and conſequent ſubmiſſion and re-admittance, which ought always to be permitted and encouraged; except in thoſe extreme caſes, where the very exiſtence of diſcipline may require, that a terrible example ſhould be made of an incorrigible offender: caſes which, I would willingly believe, will never occur.

But in order to add to the ſolemnity of expulſion, it is neceſſary to prevent a practice which occaſionally takes place, notwithſtanding there is already an exiſting order to the contrary. Children ſometimes leave a ſchool of their own accord, or are diſmiſſed for irregular attendance, and are afterwards admitted on other ſchools. Now the facility with which admiſſions are obtained, does real harm to the inſtitution, by depriving expulſion of it's terrors; and effectual

* Iſaiah.

effectual meaſures ſhould be taken to have it known, that a ſcholar who has once treated the inſtitution with ſuch contempt, is *degraded:* and can only be reinſtated after proper ſubmiſſion, and then only to the ſame ſchool that he attended before. "Order "is the ſoul of all government. It gives dignity "and ſtability to all inſtitutions. The greater the "regularity obſerved in the admiſſion of ſcholars, "however eaſy it may be rendered, the greater "favour will it be eſteemed: and the inſtitution will "be the more ſurely tranſmitted to poſterity."*

Theſe remarks may ſuffice on the nature of the penalties to be inflicted on the idle; but it was obſerved before, that it would alſo be proper to excite emulation, by rewards, praiſes, and diſtinctions.

But here alſo a difference of opinion exiſts with reſpect to the proper limitation of the principle. It has been ſeriouſly urged, and by ſome even who do not entirely diſapprove of rewarding the diligent, that there is danger to be apprehended from making the rewards too common or extravagant. And as far as I am able to comprehend the objection, it is not meant to turn on a point of œconomy, but of morality. It is ſaid that if the children be *hired* to attend, they will have no merit in their regularity; as it will proceed from mercenary views, without any regard to the final purpoſe: and it never can be proper to make uſe of bribery.

To

* Jonas Hanway.

To this it may be anſwered in general, that admitting it were poſſible to err on this hand, yet if the application be proper at all, it will ſtill be ſoon enough to think of diminiſhing the doſe, when any thing like a proof appears that it is more than adequate to produce a proper effect; but that to do it without ſuch proof would be downright ſcepticiſm and quackery. But again, the whole objection ſeems founded on a miſconception of terms. A bribe is a reward offered for the performance of a *bad* action, and therefore is as oppoſite in it's nature and tendency, to the juſt recompence of virtuous exertion, as light is to darkneſs. Let the word *motive*, *inducement*, or *encouragement*, be uſed inſtead of *bribe*, and the fallacy will be evident. And, in this ſenſe, all men are bribed ſome way or other; becauſe all are actuated by ſome motive: and the infinite diverſity to be perceived in the characters of men proceeds, either from their being ſituated under the influence of different motives, or from the ſame motive operating with different degrees of efficacy on different minds, owing to preconceived habits and aſſociations: juſt as the ſame *ſeed* thrives very differently on different grounds, according to the varying circumſtances of cultivation, climate, &c. or as the ſame *contagion* operates with different ſymptoms in different habits.

Are theſe objectors aware of the tendency of their objection? Do they conſider that it ſtrikes at the very

very root of all religious hope, and leads directly to atheism? For if a good action lose it's merit, because it is performed with "respect unto the recompence of the reward," then the greater the *bribe*, the more interested will be the action, and the less the merit; and therefore the most exalted characters on earth, act from the most mercenary views, because "they look forward to a better country," where they hope to be repaid for all their exertions and self-denials here, with a "far more exceeding and "eternal weight of glory." It follows also from this doctrine, by undeniable consequence, that *all* rewards do hurt, inasmuch as they give an undue bias to men's free will; that sunday scholars would improve more in their morals, not only if no additional temptations were thrown in their way, but also, if those, which have hitherto been held out to them, were withdrawn; and that sincere virtue would more generally abound in the hearts of men, if "verily there were *no* reward for the righteous:"—"if death were an eternal sleep:"—if virtue conferred no privileges either here or hereafter. The principle must either be true in it's whole extent, or altogether false; for it is *fundamental*, and admits of no compromise.

But here a reply is made, that the very opportunity, which these institutions afford the children of acquiring knowledge, is of itself a sufficient recompence to them; that the contemplation of the benefits they

they will ultimately derive from regular attendance, would, if they conſidered properly, prove the moſt powerful motive that could be propoſed; and that to amuſe them with the proſpect of more *immediate* reward, would only diſtract their attention from the main object. Certainly:—if they *did* conſider properly, all this would be very juſt. But what does this argument pre-ſuppoſe? but that the children *are* already (what it is the higheſt aim of the ſunday-ſchools to *make* them) capable of diſcerning their true intereſt; which, if they were, would indicate in them ſuch a ſtate of intellectual progreſs, as would well nigh ſuperſede the neceſſity of keeping up the inſtitution at all. But, in preſcribing rules for their conduct, we are to calculate, not upon what it is deſirable they *ſhould* do, but upon what it is natural to ſuppoſe they *will* do; and we muſt frame our plan accordingly. Otherwiſe, if it fail in the execution, we have no more right to complain of the diſappointment, than that phyſician would have, who without attending to the ſtate of his patient's ſtomach, ſhould preſcribe a very loathſome medicine, and when it was rejected, ſhould content himſelf with ſaying, that if it had been *retained*, it would have done good: whereas he ought to have conſidered, that it was improbable it *would* be retained. We muſt take into our account, not only the thoughtleſſneſs natural to all children, but alſo the prejudices, bad habits, and Egyptian darkneſs, which

blind

blind thoſe who are the true objects of the charity. The attendance muſt be made palatable, or it will not go down. And on this principle, the rewards muſt be ſuch as will be moſt acceptable to the children themſelves; conſequently, either money, or apparel, is preferable to books of every deſcription: and the proſpect muſt not be diſtant. Their optics are only capable of ſurveying near and palpable objects. They have yet to undergo a regular proceſs, in order to purge away the duſt and film, which obſcures their viſion. They are placed in circumſtances very ſimilar to thoſe, in which the whole human race ſtood, in the early ages of the world. The infant ſtate of knowledge had not prepared men's minds for profiting by the ſublime and diſtant proſpect of a future life, and accordingly it was not much inſiſted on, till a more convenient ſeaſon. The Moſaic diſpenſation was enforced principally by the proſpect of *temporal* good and evil. "If ye be "willing and obedient, ye ſhall eat of the good of "the land."* And even when life and immortality were more fully revealed by the goſpel, St. Paul found that thoſe who were only young in a religious courſe, required to be treated like natural children; to be fed with *milk*, which they could digeſt; and not with *meat*, which was too ſtrong for them. All perſons ſo ſituated "live by ſight, not by faith." And the true way of proceeding with them, is to propoſe

* Iſaiah.

propoſe motives ſuited to their condition, and to put away childiſh things by degrees, as they grow in wiſdom; by "perpetually ſubſtituting a purer motive for one leſs pure; which correſponds to ſome "mathematical methods of obtaining quantities to "any required degree of exactneſs, by leaving a leſs "and leſs error *ſine limite*."*

If, therefore, in diſtributing the rewards, care be taken that they be given to thoſe only who have actually deſerved them, there is no danger at preſent of their being too profuſe: on the contrary, the more liberal they are, the more powerful will be their operation. And accordingly, if no reſpectful way can be thought of, whereby the mode of diſtributing the preſent rewards can be ſo adjuſted, as to co-operate more perfectly with the main deſign, and yet ſo as not to dictate impertinently to the donors; then the inſtitution ſhould not reſt entirely on ſuch extraneous ſupport. A proviſion ſhould be made, which the committee can direct excluſively; and it ſhould be as ample as the finances will permit. Mr. VOGHT ſays, that at Hamburgh, they made a point of entirely *finiſhing* the education of the children under their management; and moſt of them turned out well. And he marks it as a fortunate æra, "when they were enabled to apply a "*greater* ſhare of their funds to the *better* education "of the children."

And

* Hartley.

And were there no other alternative in the preſent inſtance, it is probable the ends of the inſtitution would be better anſwered, if a leſs number were admitted to partake of it, and theſe were thereby more certainly cultivated to ſome durable purpoſe; than if, by aiming to diffuſe the fund over a larger extent, it's operation upon every part were thereby rendered ſo tranſient and nugatory, that the good ſeed, which was ſown at ſchool, would ſoon be choked by noxious weeds not thoroughly ſubdued.—Upon the ſame principle that a perſon, intending to improve waſte lands, with only a limited ſum of money at his diſpoſal, would better conſult his own profit and the public good, by undertaking no more at once, than he could well bring into a productive ſtate, than he would do, by vainly attempting more than his reſources were equal to; whereby the cultivation of the whole muſt neceſſarily be ſo imperfect, that it would ſpeedily relapſe into it's original wildneſs; and the capital employed would prove, eventually, to be little better than thrown away.

It is hoped, however, there will be no occaſion to *contract* our *preſent* ſphere, in order to increaſe the effect; for many reſpectable perſons have declared their readineſs to increaſe their ſubſcriptions, on condition that an adequate ſum be applied to, what they conceive to be, ſo rational a purpoſe.

But *praiſe* is cheap, and will often do much, and where it is due, it ſhould not be ſpared; for one

reaſon, why the loweſt claſſes are ſo ſeldom induced to pay any regard to their character, is, that their ortitude and trials are not ſufficiently known by their more affluent neighbours. And as the ſcheme muſt ultimately proſper in proportion, as the public mind is well affected towards it, and as no affection, good or bad, can exiſt long in the mind, unleſs occaſionally refreſhed by outward acts; it were much to be wiſhed, that the ſubſcribers at large would more frequently intereſt themſelves in viſiting the ſchools; and eſpecially that they would each pay attention to the children recommended by themſelves. "The preſence of the gentlemen of the committee, "together with the viſitors, and perſons of rank and "fortune, raiſes in the children and their parents, "a better opinion of themſelves, and impreſſes "upon them a certain ſelf-reſpect, which is one of "the great guards of virtue."*

In the early days of the inſtitution, it appears that application was made to the pariſh committee, requeſting them to uſe their influence, in perſuading the poor to ſend their children to ſchool. And in ſome places, it is cuſtomary to ſend circular letters to the paſtors of the different congregations, once a year, inviting them to recommend, in their places, a ſcheme whoſe grand moral purpoſe ſeems ſo intimately related to their own. Might it not be proper to adopt the ſame expedients here? and to requeſt

* Mr. Brooke, of Bath.

requeſt from time to time, that the clergy, magiſtrates, churchwardens, overſeers, and public in general, would, in their ſeveral capacities, lend their friendly aſſiſtance to the managers, in the proſecution of their undertaking. And this application is recommended to be made, not ſo much with a view to obtain more *money*, as to excite, among the preſent ſubſcribers, and the parents of the ſcholars, a more lively attention to the ſtate of the charity.

I will beg leave to ſuggeſt one way, in which individuals may render eſſential ſervice to the inſtitution. When any one catches a child in miſchief, it would be praiſe-worthy in him, to find out whether the offender be a ſunday ſcholar; and if ſo, to inform the maſter or viſitor, in order that a ſolemn enquiry might take place. A few well conducted informations, of this ſort, would have nearly the ſame effect upon the children, that the diſguiſed patroles had on the *beggars* at Munich; they would fancy they ſaw an informer in every perſon they met, and conſequently, would grow more circumſpect in their conduct. Nor is it foreign to the preſent purpoſe to remark, that ſociety would be benefited, if *begging* were more completely aboliſhed; for it is the nurſe of idleneſs, and of all vice.

The next point to be conſidered is, what *qualifications* are to be required, as neceſſary to obtain the rewards: and it is obvious they ſhould be ſuch as are equally in the power of all to attain. Conſequently

no regard ſhould be paid to difference of abilities, or proficiency in learning; but regular attendance, cleanlineſs of perſon, orderly behaviour, and diligence alone ſhould be inſiſted on. The merits of the candidates will thus be eaſily aſcertained; and the *diſappointed* will more readily ſee the juſtice of the deciſion, than if the queſtion had been concerning abilities, and will not ſo ſoon deſpair of hereafter earning the reward themſelves; which laſt is a conſideration of the firſt magnitude. And in order to give all a fair chance, the periods of probation ſhould come round *quickly*, and the reward may be proportioned accordingly. Otherwiſe, ſhould a child have been prevented from attending at the early part of the time, and have no motive to be induſtrious afterwards, there would be danger of his falling off. With the ſame intention, there ſhould be a *gradation* of rewards, for the encouragement of thoſe, who, having been irregular, are diſpoſed to attend better.

What may be the moſt expedient *quantity* of attendance to be required, or of rewards to be offered, will depend upon circumſtances, which cannot be enumerated here. The committee will at all times be competent to adjuſt the proportion. But it may be obſerved in general, that it is not adviſeable to fix a very *early* hour for aſſembling; becauſe many of the children, who have not a proper change, are obliged to wait till their cloaths be dried on Sunday morning; and their parents, being compelled to riſe betimes,

betimes, and to labour hard ſix days in the week, very naturally wiſh to reſt on the ſeventh; and therefore do not make their children's breakfaſts ready, as ſoon as might be wiſhed. It has been a practice indeed to permit the ſcholars to return to breakfaſt, but it ought to be diſcontinued, for nothing is ultimately gained by it; as a child, who has to go backwards and forwards, muſt neceſſarily ſpend leſs time in the ſchool, and more upon the way, than if a reaſonable time had been allowed for breakfaſt, before meeting: and further it opens a wide door for impoſition; as children who have actually breakfaſted, may lay hold of this handle, as an excuſe for running about, while they ought to be better employed. And we ſhould ſcrupulouſly avoid all occaſions of leading them into temptation.

In *diſtributing* the rewards, the moſt inflexible impartiality ſhould be obſerved. Every one that has performed certain expreſs conditions, ſhould receive a recompence; and no excuſe, not even ſickneſs, ſhould entitle them to it otherwiſe Conſequently no ſpecific ſum can be ſet apart before-hand; it will be better to take as much from the general fund, as may be wanted at the time; and if enough cannot be ſpared to anſwer the purpoſe, a ſeparate ſubſcription may be eaſily collected.

It has been objected, that it would be cruel and unjuſt, not to make ſome exception in favour of ſickneſs. But let it be conſidered that the diſputes

which would ariſe, in deciding between *real* and *pretended* caſes, would eventually cauſe more diſcontent, than the regulation, as it ſtands at preſent. Beſides it will tend to diminiſh the number of ſuch excuſes; and at leaſt to put an end to the very prevalent, but improper cuſtom of giving children phyſic on Sundays, for ſlight ailments.

But again, what *claim* have ſuch children to the reward of diligence? How is it to be known that they would have deſerved it, had they been in health? But even ſuppoſing this to be probable (which is all that can be admitted) yet not having actually performed the conditions, it would be unjuſt to put them on an equal footing with thoſe that have. If a reward had been offered for the beſt *reader*, inſtead of the beſt *attender*, the impropriety of admitting ſickneſs, as a ſubſtitute for the proper qualification, would have appeared very plain; but the principle is the ſame in both caſes.

Indeed it is one of the many hardſhips attending ſickneſs, that it prevents children from improving their time to ſo great advantage, as thoſe who are bleſſed with better health: but it is an evil that cannot be remedied by *man*, without incurring a greater. Such children are always entitled to the moſt tender compaſſion, and may be very fit objects of charity; but *this* is not the fund to be applied to for their relief. It is more properly deſtined to pay wages for ſervices performed; and it would be as great a perverſion

perverſion of it to apply it to the relief of the ſick, as it would be to employ a man for a maſter whoſe ſole recommendation was that he was poor and had a large family. Miſtaken pity, when it leads men to diſpenſe with general principles, invariably does hurt.

It may be added, however, that children detained by ſickneſs will always have *one* privilege which would not be granted in any other caſe; their names will be continued on the rolls, during their abſence. And as ſickly children can never undergo much bodily fatigue, perhaps they ought to be ſo far favoured, as to be recommended, in preference, to the blue-coat ſchools; provided they have always behaved ſo as to deſerve it. But they certainly ought not to receive any other reward, which they have not earned; for it would be robbing thoſe that *have* of their fair diſtinction. The original principle muſt always be kept in view, or we ſhall be continually falling into error.

Such are the ideas that have occurred to me on the ſubject of Sunday-Schools. If, in explaining them, I have been led to a tedious length, it ſhould be recollected that the greater part is taken up in repelling objections, which have been ſeriouſly urged by perſons, whoſe opinions were entitled to reſpect. How far theſe may have been obviated, to the ſatisfaction of unprejudiced minds, is left for others to determine. But if there be any error in the reaſoning,

ing, it will be an act of kindneſs to point it out. "If any one has any thing better to propoſe, let "him impart his thoughts with candour; but if not, "let him join with me in adopting theſe."* "And "let me intreat all parties, as a ſincere friend, and "lover of all, to lay to heart the charges here "brought, to examine how far they are true, and "*reform* wherever they are found to be ſo."†

But it is neceſſary to warn the ſanguine, that nothing could be a greater detriment to the propoſed plan, than to expect that it ſhould produce an *inſtantaneous* effect. We muſt not expect miracles. Bad habits are not broken in a moment. And as ſomething more than a mere *vote* is required to convert a wilderneſs into a fruitful garden; ſo, in cultivating a neglected mind, length of *time* and a ſteady application of the proper *means* will be neceſſary to produce the effect. But ultimate ſucceſs ſeems, under providence, alike certain in both caſes. Mr. VOGHT ſays, that "the ſchools at Hamburgh, which, at "the time of their eſtabliſhment, were a collection "of the moſt abandoned children, moſt of whom "had been uſed to beg, required a long time, before "they were able to produce in them the mere habit "of fixing their *attention*, not to ſpeak of inſtruction." But he adds, that "gentle means and perſeverance "at laſt got the better of great part of the vices "which ſpring from begging."

Here

* Horace. † Hartley.

Here I may remark the high importance of the office of viſitor, and the neceſſity of it's being filled by thoſe only, who are diſpoſed to be punctual and active; and as experience has proved that it is difficult to ſecure a regular attendance, in any public concern, unleſs the defaulters be ſubject to ſome trifling penalty; it is hoped that all, who undertake ſo ſolemn an engagement, will chearfully agree to pay the ſame fine, when they neglect to attend the *ſchools*, as is already impoſed for not attending the *committee*, an object certainly far leſs important. Indeed an old order to this effect may be found on the minute-book, but it does not appear ever to have been enforced.

But in this view, no perſon ſhould be appointed without his own *free conſent*, and conſequently it is improper to fix viſitors by *rotation*, as ſome have propoſed. It is indeed a noble employment, becauſe, in endeavouring to inſtruct others, we may learn truths of the utmoſt importance to ourſelves; but no man ſhould be *compelled* to accept it.

Mr. BROOKE found that, during the ſummer months, when the viſitors left Bath, the ſchools uniformly decreaſed in number; and he earneſtly recommends it to ſuch as are obliged to leave the place, always to appoint perſons to officiate for them, during their abſence.

I ſhall conclude with a remark which he makes on this ſubject. "On the viſitors every thing depends;

"and

" and no one ſhould undertake the office, who is not " reſolved to perſevere in it.—They have to combat " and bear with the ignorance, ingratitude, and even " rudeneſs of the parents, who are often blind to " their own intereſt. People cannot be compelled " to do what is even for their own advantage. *Per-* " *ſuaſion* therefore is the only method, with a reſo- " lution never to be provoked to wrath. Pity muſt " take place of anger; and the grand object had in " view, to reform the minds of the riſing generation, " muſt make every impediment vaniſh."

It now remains only to digeſt the above principles into a practical ſhape. It is propoſed therefore

1. That the rolls be called in all the ſchools, at certain hours to be fixed by the committee, and to vary with the ſeaſon; but that no change ever be made till the ſecond Sunday after the meeting of the committee, that public notice may firſt be given in all the ſchools.

2. That exactly half an hour after the firſt call, the names of thoſe who did not then appear, be called again, and if they anſwer, that a dot be placed behind the uſual mark; but if they do not appear in time for the ſecond call, that they be left upon the roll as abſent.

3. That if a child enter the ſchool after the firſt name is called, he be not marked as preſent at that call, though his own name ſhould not be paſt, nor be permitted to take his ſeat till the call be finiſhed;

and

and if neither the viſitor, nor a ſingle ſcholar be arrived at the hour appointed, that the maſter muſt not wait a moment, but call the roll exactly at the time.

4. That no child be for the future allowed to go back to breakfaſt, on any pretence whatever.

5. That the viſitors forfeit ſix-pence each, as often as they are not preſent at the time fixed for the firſt call of the roll, both morning and afternoon, unleſs ſick or out of town: and in the latter caſe, that they either find a ſubſtitute, who is a member of the committee, and who will ſubmit to the ſame fine, or pay it themſelves, for each time they are abſent: and that the maſters keep an account of all ſuch fines, and report them to the committee at the monthly meetings; in order that they may be paid to the treaſurer, and go to the general fund.

6. That the viſitor, if he cannot ſtop till the ſecond call, do, when he comes the next time, call up all thoſe who either did not appear at all, or in proper time for the firſt call; and calmly explain to them the conſequences of their irregularity, and urge them to attend better in future, or they will neither improve in their learning, nor obtain any of the rewards that are held forth to the diligent: that if this exhortation twice repeated have no effect, the viſitor call upon the *parents*, and inform them that it is not intended to *force* their children to ſchool, and therefore it is hoped they will chearfully ſecond the

the good wiſhes of the ſubſcribers, by ſending them of their own free will; that if they be diſpoſed to be more punctual, the paſt will be forgiven; but that if the children be not more regular in future, he muſt repreſent them to the committee, who will expel them for a warning to others.

7. That if a child be abſent a whole day, the viſitor ſend a ſcholar to aſk the cauſe; and if this meſſage do not bring a ſatisfactory anſwer, that he be expected to call himſelf, and know the truth.

8. That the children be frequently exhorted to waſh their hands, face, and mouth, and to comb their hair, and ſay their prayers morning and evening; to behave reſpectfully to the maſters, and to each other, both at church and in the ſchools, and by no means to upbraid one another with paſt offences, which have been diſcuſſed by the viſitor; and alſo that they be ſtrongly cautioned againſt lying, profane curſing and ſwearing, and every other ſort of indecent language; and that they be enjoined to abſtain from miſchief of every kind, particularly from all cruelty to dumb animals, from ſtealing, from breaking fences and injuring plantations, and in general from all baſe and diſhoneſt actions: and if a child be detected in any thing diſhoneſt, miſchievous, or criminal, that the maſter inform the viſitor, who muſt mildly remonſtrate with the offender, out of the preſence of the other ſcholars: but that if the ſame offence be repeated, or one of a like

like kind committed, he be publicly and ſeverely reprimanded, and informed that if ever he tranſgreſs again, he will certainly be expelled; and accordingly that for the third offence, whatever profeſſions he may make, he be reported to the committee, and expelled.

9. That when a child has been expelled for diſobedience, or has left ſchool of his own accord, and afterwards wiſhes to renew his attendance, he be always ſent back to the ſchool that he attended before, unleſs the viſitor ſee ſome good reaſon to the contrary, which muſt be determined by the committee at their firſt meeting: and that every new ſcholar carry his ticket to the head maſter, who muſt firſt explain to him the conſequences of telling a lie, and then enquire whether he has ever attended any other ſchool: and that any child attempting to practice an impoſition, be expelled by the viſitor, immediately on conviction: and that every maſter keep a liſt of thoſe that are diſcharged from all the ſchools.

10. That if the conduct of a child have been very blameable, or if he perſiſt in telling a lie to ſcreen it, where the proof is clear, the viſitor may order him to be puniſhed; but that on no account whatever a blow be given to a child, except with the conſent and in the preſence of the viſitor.

11. That if any maſter in an unguarded moment, tranſgreſs the laſt rule, the child may complain to

the viſitor, who muſt repreſent to the maſter, in *private*, the impropriety of his conduct, and the harm it will do to the inſtitution; that if the offence be repeated, the viſitor report him to the committee, to be reprimanded in ſeverer terms; but that for the third offence, the viſitor be obliged to call a meeting of the committee within the week, who are to diſmiſs him as totally unfit for his place: and that a child who has been unlawfully puniſhed, have the offer of being transferred to any other ſchool.

12. That thoſe gentlemen of the committee, who ſubſcribe alſo to the blue-coat ſchools, be deſired to make a point of attending the elections of children to thoſe ſchools, and of giving their ſupport to the moſt deſerving candidates: and that before every ſuch election, the viſitors of each ſchool examine the attendance of thoſe who mean to offer themſelves: That the certificate be ſo drawn up as to expreſs, with preciſion, the degree of regularity; and that no maſter ſign a certificate, till the viſitor has ſigned it firſt. And it is ſincerely to be hoped that no viſitor will ever ſuffer the ſpirit of this rule to evaporate, by careleſsly ſetting his name to an account which he has not examined.

13. That at the end of every calendar month, one penny each be given to all thoſe who have not been abſent at a ſingle call of the roll, during that period; and a half-penny each, to all who have not been abſent at the firſt call more than once.

14. That

14. That every year, before the annual ſtatement is publiſhed, the rolls of the whole year be examined at a meeting of the committee, called for that purpoſe; and that all who have not been abſent at a ſingle call, have a piece of apparel conferred on them, which may be generally known as a mark of diſtinguiſhed merit: and when the number is aſcertained, that notice be given to the public in the printed ſtatement, that theſe honorary rewards will be diſtributed in a very public manner, on a day to be mentioned in the paper: and that the names of theſe children, with the ſchools they have attended, be alſo mentioned; and that a printed ſtatement be hung up in every ſchool.

15. That a printed copy of theſe rules be hung up in every ſchool, to be publicly read by the viſitors at leaſt once a month, with ſuch additional obſervations as they may think proper to make, in order that all parties may alike remember them.

And that the viſitors be requeſted to invite their acquaintance to accompany them to the ſchools, and there to point out to them the cleaneſt and beſt behaved among the ſcholars; and to beg that they will each aſſiſt in promoting the intereſt of the inſtitution, by attending to the children recommended by themſelves, and alſo by diſcouraging begging, and by giving information to ſome of the officers of the inſtitution, whenever they find a ſcholar doing any thing that is improper.

And

And that the friends of the children of diſſenters be requeſted to take care that they attend their reſpective places of worſhip, when the others go to the church.

MAY 3, 1797.

FINIS.